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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/523,569	01/27/2005	Osamu Chujo	02796/0202443-US0	5858
7278	7590	12/08/2006		
DARBY & DARBY P.C. P. O. BOX 5257 NEW YORK, NY 10150-5257			EXAMINER CHANG, VICTOR S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

1771

DATE MAILED: 12/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/523,569

Applicant(s)

CHUJO ET AL.

Examiner

Victor S. Chang

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6-19 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 January 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/27/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election of Group I (claims 1-11) and Species A (foam sheet) in the reply filed on 11/13/2006 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)). In summary, claims 1-5 are active. Claims 6-19 are withdrawn.

Drawings

2. New corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in this application because the drawings have titles not in English. Applicant is advised to employ the services of a competent patent draftsman outside the Office, as the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office no longer prepares new drawings. The corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The requirement for corrected drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the disclosed invention is inoperative and therefore lacks utility. Fig. 2 shows that the floating foamed cells are closed cells, whereas

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throughout the specification nowhere is there a disclosure providing a plausible process to form a closed cell from a layer of synthetic resin film. More particularly, while it is reasonable that the vacuum assisted foaming process is capable of forming cells which is open to the base sheet of a paperboard, which supplies moisture for expanding the film under a vacuum, the cells are necessarily formed as open cells toward the base sheet, and there is no plausible mechanism for how closed cells can be formed from a merely softened resin film. The claimed invention appears to be inoperable, and therefore lacks utility.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

More particularly, the claims are generally narrative and indefinite, failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document and are replete with grammatical and idiomatic errors. For example, there are multiple verbs "is" throughout claim 1; the term "a foaming plane" is not defined in the specification, and it is unclear what is the exactly structure of such a term, etc. Clarifying claim language is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

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7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 1, 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2000-177039 [machine translation].

JP '039 relates to a foam laminated sheet. Fig. 2 shows that a polyethylene film 13 is laminated to a surface of a paperboard 10 with a joining inhibitor 11 applied in a spotted fashion. Figs. 4-6 shows that the laminated sheet is heated using a hot plate, so that the part which is not joined to the board 10 by the inhibitor 11 is made to foam under a vacuum suction to obtain the foam laminated sheet [paragraphs 0009, 0015-0016]. Foaming is performed by evaporation of the moisture contained in paper [paragraph 0006]. By adjusting the magnitude of the spot of the junction inhibition agent, the magnitude and the location of the foaming cells can be adjusted [paragraph 0017]. The term “a foaming plane made of a foamed cell group” is interpreted as “a layer of foamed cells”, and JP '039 reads on the interpreted structure.

For claims 1, 2 and 4, JP '039 reads on the instant invention as claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claims 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over JP 2000-177039 [machine translation].

The teachings of JP '039 are again relied upon as set forth above.

For claim 3, JP '039 shows in Fig. 6 that the foamed cells are of the same height. Although JP '039 is silent about adjacent cells in contact to each other, since JP '039 teaches that the magnitude and the location of the foaming cells can be adjusted, forming cells in contact to each other is considered to be either anticipated by JP '039, or an obvious selection to one skilled in the art, motivated by the desire to obtain improved thermal insulation or surface design. Regarding the floating cells, since JP '039 teaches essentially the same subject matter and made by the same process, the floating cells are reasonably considered to be either anticipated by JP '039, or are obviously provided by practicing the invention of the prior art.

For claim 5, regarding the product-by-process limitation, since the process limitation has not been shown on the record to produce a patentably distinct article, the formed articles are rendered prima facie obvious, and this limitation at the present time has not been given patentable weight.

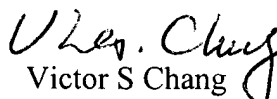
Conclusion

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Victor S. Chang whose telephone number is 571-272-1474. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 - 5:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel H. Morris can be reached on 571-272-1478. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Victor S Chang
Examiner
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12/6/2006